

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMCONSUL HAMBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2972

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AMCONSUL BREMEN

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AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL MUNICH

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C O N F I D E N T I A L HAMBURG 0666

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJ: RESULTS OF THE JUNE 9, 1974 LAND ELECTIONS IN LOWER
SAXONY

REF: HAMBURG 654

1. THE JUNE 9 STATE ELECTIONS IN LOWER SAXONY WAS A PHOTO
FINISH VICTORY FOR THE COMBINED FORCES OF THE SPD AND FDP
OVER THE CDU. AS WE PREDICTED, THE CDU WON A PSYCHOLOGICAL
VICTORY BY WINNING A PLURALITY OF THE VOTES BUT THE 1.2
PERCENT MARGIN OF THE SPD/FDP WAS SUFFICIENT TO TILT THE
SCALES IN FAVOR OF THE REELECTION OF THE KUBEL ADMINISTRATION
WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE FDP.

2. BY COMPARISON WITH THE 76.7 PERCENT TURNOUT FOR THE LANDTAG
ELECTIONS IN 1970, 84.5 PERCENT OF THE ELECTORATE WENT TO THE
POLLS ON THIS OCCASION. THE CDU POLLED 48.9 PERCENT OF THE VOTE
COMPARED WITH THE 45.7 PERCENT IT RECEIVED IN 1970, AN ADVANCE
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OF 3.2 PERCENT; THE SPD DROPPED TO 43.0 PERCENT OVER THE 46.3

PERCENT IT RECEIVED IN 1970, A LOSS OF 3.3 PERCENT; AND THE FDP
CROSSED THE THRESHOLD THIS ELECTION BY WINNING 7.1 PERCENT OF
THE VOTE OVER THE 4.4 PERCENT OF THE VOTE IT RECEIVED IN 1970.
THE NPD RECEIVED 0.6 PERCENT AND THE KPD 0.4 PERCENT.

3. THE RATIO OF SEATS IN THE NEW LANDTAG BETWEEN THE SPD/FDP
AND THE CDU REMAINS UNCHANGED. THE FINAL COMPOSITION WILL BE
67 SEATS FOR THE SPD AND 11 SEATS FOR THE FDP, GIVING THE
PROPOSED COALITION A MAJORITY OF ONE OVER THE 77 SEATS WHICH
THE CDU WILL CONTROL.

4. BOTH CULTURAL AFFAIRS MINISTER PETER VON OERTZEN AND HIS
STATE SECRETARY, PROFESSOR JOIST GROLLE, LOST THEIR RESPECTIVE
ELECTORAL DISTRICTS TO THE CDU. THE SPECULATION IS THAT VOTER
DISSATISFACTION WITH THE CONTROVERSIAL RADICAL REFORMS INITIATED
BY VON OERTZEN PROBABLY CAUSED THE SPD TO LOSE THESE DISTRICTS.
THE ISSUE OF SCHOOL REFORM WAS BITTERLY AND AGGRESSIVELY DEBATED
BY THE CDU THROUGHOUT THE CAMPAIGN.

5. THE RESULT OF THE JUNE 23 ELECTION IN THE NORTHEIM DISTRICT,
WHERE ON JUNE 3 GUENTER LUDWIG, THE CDU CANDIDATE, WAS KILLED
IN AN AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT, WILL NOT INFLUENCE THE MAJORITY
SITUATION IN THE NEW LANDTAG. EVEN IF THE CDU MANAGES, WHICH IS
IMPROBABLE, TO WIN THE ELECTION THERE, THE PERCENTAGE OF THE
ELECTORATE IN NORTHEIM IS INSUFFICIENT SO AS TO TILT THE SCALES
TOWARD AN ELECTORAL VICTORY FOR THE CDU. CONVERSELY, AS IS PROBABLE,
AN OVERWHELMING SPD/FDP VICTORY IN THAT DISTRICT MIGHT ALTER
THE SEATING RATIO IN THE LANDTAG TO GIVE THE SPD/FDP 79 SEATS
AND THE CDU 76 SEATS.

6. LATE LAST NIGHT, WILFRIED HASSELMANN, THE CDU CANDIDATE,
WAS ASKED WHETHER HIS PARTY WOULD NOT NOW INVITE THE FDP TO
FORM A COALITION GOVERNMENT IN HANNOVER. HASSELMANN DISMISSED
THE SUGGESTION AS UNREALISTIC. THE TWO PARTIES, HE SAID,
CROSSED THE RUBICON ON THAT ISSUE SOME TIME AGO AND HE DID NOT
ENVISAGE ANY SUCH COALITION ARRANGEMENT WITHIN THE FORESEEABLE
FUTURE.

7. THERE IS NO MISTAKING, HOWEVER, HASSELMANN'S OBVIOUS DELIGHT
WITH THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTION. HE CONSIDERS IT MORE THAN JUST
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A PSYCHOLOGICAL VICTORY FOR HIS PARTY AND A CLEAR INDICATION
THAT THE PENDULUM IS CONTINUING TO SWING TOWARD THE CDU ON A
NATIONAL SCALE. FOR ITS PART, THE SPD IS SUBDUED IN VICTORY.
MINISTER PRESIDENT KUBEL KNOWS THAT WITHOUT THE FDP IN HIS
CORNER, THE SPD WOULD HAVE SUFFERED A STUNNING LOSS. ONE OF HIS
ADVISORS INFORMED ME LAST NIGHT THAT KUBEL FACES SOME FRUSTRATING
DAYS AHEAD AS HE ATTEMPTS TO FORM A COALITION GOVERNMENT
AND AS HE ATTEMPTS TO RECONCILE THE DIFFERENT ECONOMIC PHILO-

SOPHIES OF THE SPD AND THE FDP. KUBEL REALIZES THAT THE JUNIOR
FDP PARTNER WILL DEMAND, AT THE PRICE OF ITS SUPPORT, A
DISPROPORTIONATELY STRONG INFLUENCE IN THE FORMATION OF
THE KUBEL GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICIES. BROGAN

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